

PARANOIA

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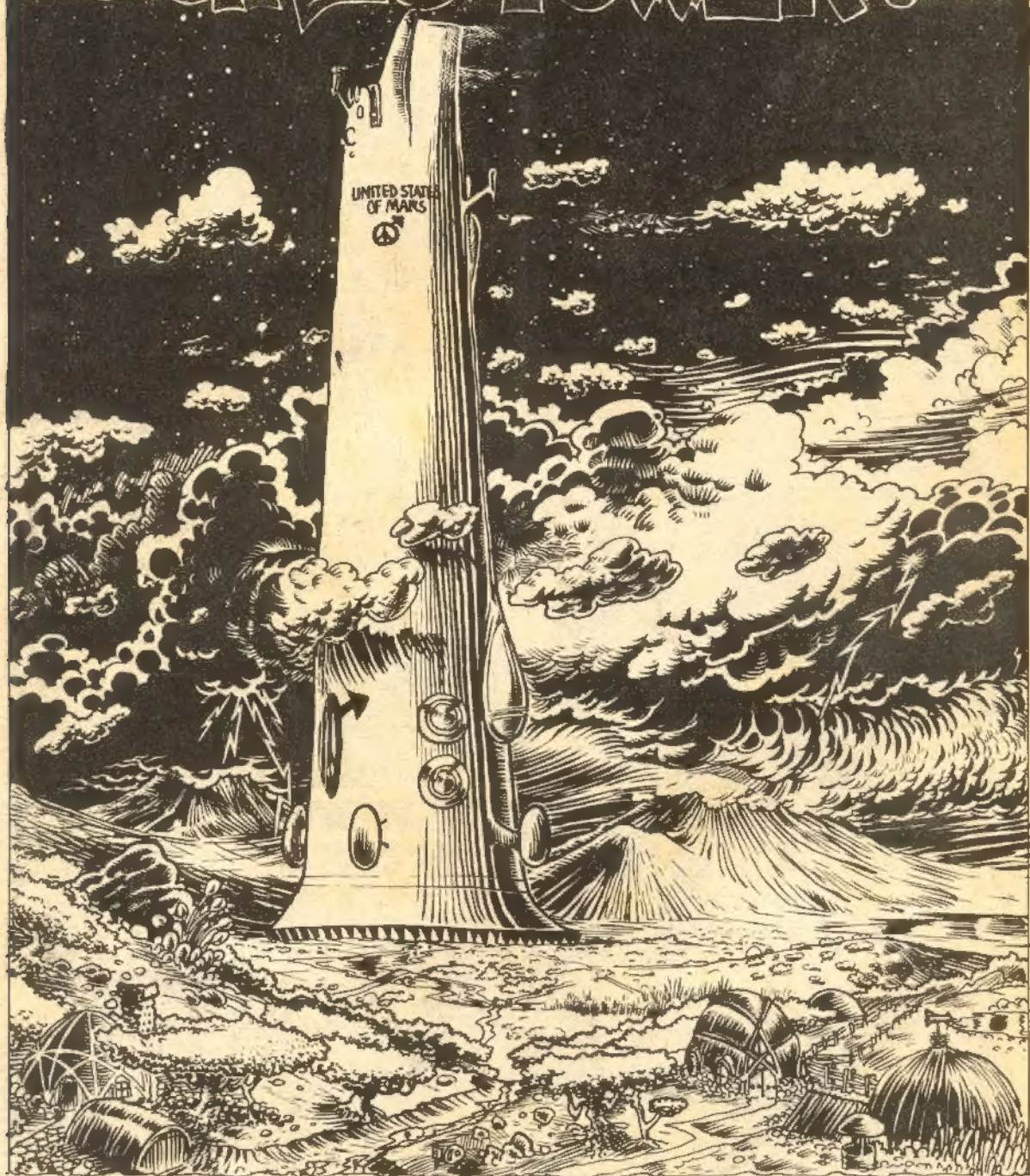




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TALES FROM THE

OGRE'S TOWER!



THE NIGHT HAD BEEN TUMULTUOUS WITH A VIOLENT STORM, THAT STROKED THE MOORS WITH LIGHTNING FINGERS AND THUNDEROUS CARESSES, AND FLOODED THE STREETS OF TOGURUM WITH BILIOUS MUDDY WATER. THE PEOPLE STAYED WARM IN THEIR COBBLE HIDEY-HOUSES, BUT WHEN THE STORM HAD PASSED, A NEW CHILL SHIVERED DOWN THEIR BACKS. FOR THE SENTRIES SAID THAT THE TEMPEST HAD BROUGHT DARK MAGICK, AND THERE WAS A MIGHTY TOWER ON THE HEATH. THE PEOPLE GATHERED ON THE CITY WALL TO GAZE THEREUPON THE OBELISK, AND THE FEAR ROSE IN THEIR EYES, FOR THEY KNEW THERE WAS A NEW OGRE ABROAD IN THE LAND....

AT THE ROYAL PALACE, THE ASTRONOMER SING TOLD THE KING, WHOSE NAME WAS DING, ALL ABOUT IT. THE KING DING, EVEN LOOKED AT IT THROUGH SING'S TELESCOPE, SING TURNED TO DING (THE KING) AND QUERIED HIM, FOR HE WAS THE KING(DING) AND THEREFORE, SOMEWHAT WISE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT'S GOING TO DO?

IS THAT A QUERIE?

I DON'T KNOW. I HOPE IT BLOWS UP OR GOES AWAY OR SOMETHING....

THE REPUTATION OF DING (THE KING) AS BEING SOMEONE SOMEWHAT WISE, HAD GOTTEN TO THE PEOPLE, AND THEY SENT A CONTINGENT TO ASK HIM WHAT WAS THIS TOWER, WHAT IS THIS OGRE DOING HERE, HOW DID HE THINK THEY WERE GOING TO PAY HIS LATEST TAXES, AND OTHER IN-QUERIES OF WAXING IMPORTANCE.

IS THAT A QUERIE?

VERY WELL, I WISH TO MAKE MYSELF PERFECTLY CLEAR. I INTEND TO DO ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING ABOUT IT THAT I CAN POSSIBLY CAN DO, PROVIDING IT IS POSSIBLE (AND NOT IMPOSSIBLE) TO DO ANYTHING AT ALL ABOUT IT!

IT'S HERE TO EAT OUR CROPS, RAPE OUR WINES, AND MARRY OUR DAUGHTERS. WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO ABOUT IT, DING, OL' KING?

YOU GOT A PRETTY DAMN GLIB LIP FER A KING, DING. SO DO YER THING. IF YA DONT, YOU'LL SWING!

THE PEOPLE WANT TO HING...ER HANG ME, SING, AND I DIDNT DO A THING!

PERHAPS THAT'S THE PROBLEM, DING. (OL' KING)

THE TOWER STOOD ON THE MOOR AND LO! IT DISGORGED FORTH TALL OGRES, AND THEY STRODE ACROSS THE LAND AND HARVESTED EVERYONES CROPS. SO EVERYONE WENT TO SEE DING (OL KING).

THE OGRES CAME OUT AND HARVESTED ALL OUR CROPS, AND YOU SIT AROUND LIKE A LUMP ON A STUMP! GET WITH IT, KING (OL KING)!!

EVEN AS THEY THREATENED THE OGRES CAME OUT AND STOLE ALL THEIR LIVESTOCK (WELL SOME OF IT) AND EVEN A FEW UNWARY SPRATS AND URCHINS WHO INCAUTIOUSLY TRIPPED TOO CLOSE TO THE LINE.

OH! THE OGRE IS STEPPING ON THE BRIDGE! WHATEVER'LL WE DO?

INDEED KING. (DING) DO YOU WANT TO SWING?

HAMMM.

SING, WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

HMM. I DO HAVE A PLAN, DING (OL KING)!

GOOD PEOPLE EVEN NOW, AS THE OGRES RAPE OUR LAND, OUR GOOD AND MIGHTY KING, DING, HAS TOLD ME THAT HE, DING, WILL TAKE MY MAGIC RING AND HIS BLESSED SWORD AND GO OUT TO DO BATTLE WITH THE DREAD OGRES OF NIGHT! LONG LIVE KING DING!

ARE THEY DOING THAT, TOO?

VA OLD QUERIE!

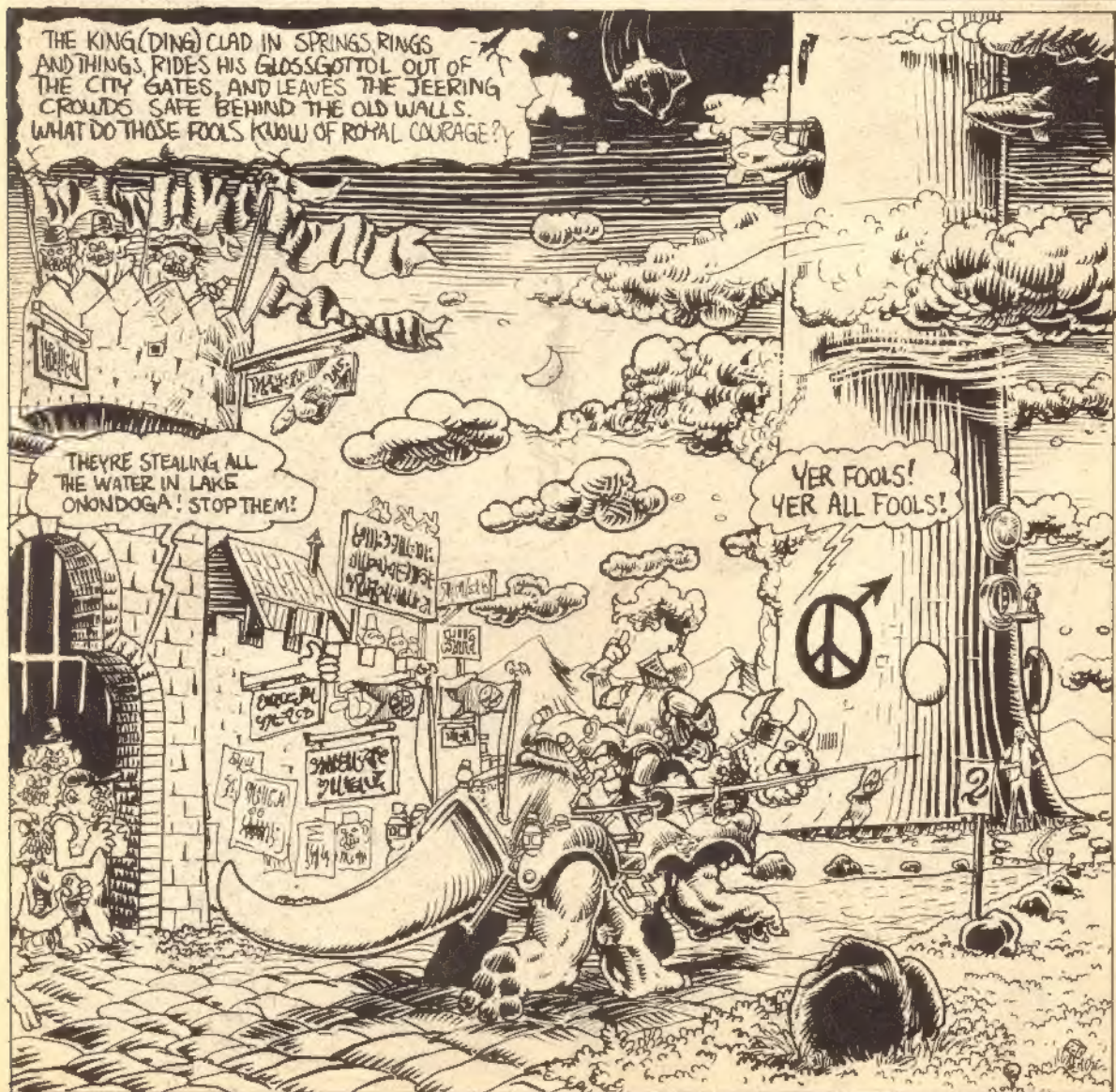
IT'S ABOUT TIME!

DID I SAY THAT?

NO, BUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THEY THINK YOU DID, SO GET ON OUT THERE AND SHOW THOSE OGRES SOME ROYAL COURAGE!

SING, SOMETHING IS RADICALLY WRING-ER.. WRONG, HERE!

YOU'RE RIGHT DING (EX-KING) THE PEOPLE ARE CRUDE AND IGNORANT TO DEMAND SUCH VIOLENT SPORT OF THEIR LIEGE!







IT'S PROBABLY FROM TH' LIL' WALLED CITY OVER THERE!

DAMN! TH' LIL' FUCKER'S GOT A SWORD!



FAROUT!

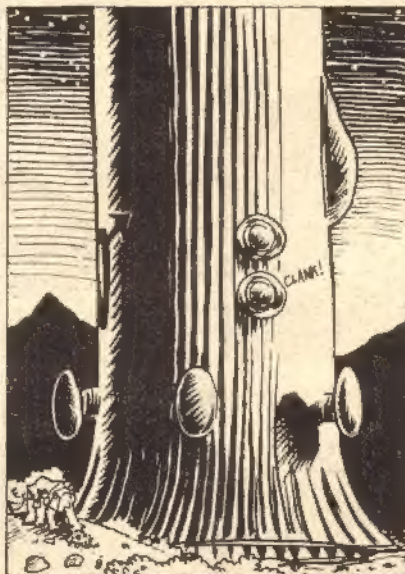
WOW! IT'S CUTE! CAN WE TAKE IT IN WITH US, HUH LOUDIE HUH?



YEAH, I GUESS SO, BUT WE GOTTA KEEP IT IN TH' LAB!

YAAAY!

PUT ME DOWN! I'M DING! I'M TH' KING!



CLANK!



THINGS DIDN'T REALLY GO TOO BAD BY DING, FOR HE LEARNED TO DO TRICKS QUICKLY, AND EVENTUALLY LEARNED TO TALK, SO THEY GAVE HIM A WHOLE DOLLHOUSE WITH CATERED FOOD. IT WASN'T BAD, SERVICE WAS FAIR.

THIS BROWN RICE IS GIVING ME THE SHITS, TAKE IT BACK!

I'M ROYALTY IN EXILE... YOU WANT I SHOULD STARVE?



BACK HOME, SING (THE KING) HAD HIS TROUBLES, FOR THERE WAS A FAMINE IN THE LAND, CAUSED BY THE BLASTOFF OF THE TOWER AND THE OGRE'S HARVESTS, SO HE WAS THE FIRST WHO THE PEOPLE ATE.

PUT ME DOWN! I'M SING! I'M THE KING!

MMM! KING VITAMIN, YUM!

MMM! BREAK FAST OF KINGS!

THE HUNTER

ART: C. DALLAS
SCRIPT: S. GOODYEAR, DALLAS

... STALKS HIS ELUSIVE PREY. EACH
FALLEN TREE, EACH SNARLING BRIAR
SEEKS TO HALT HIS RELENTLESS
ADVANCE.



HE SUDDENLY FREEZES AT A DISTANT
RUSTLING OF LIMBS. SLOWLY RAIS-
ING THE RIFLE HE AIMS; HIS
FINGER TIGHTENS...



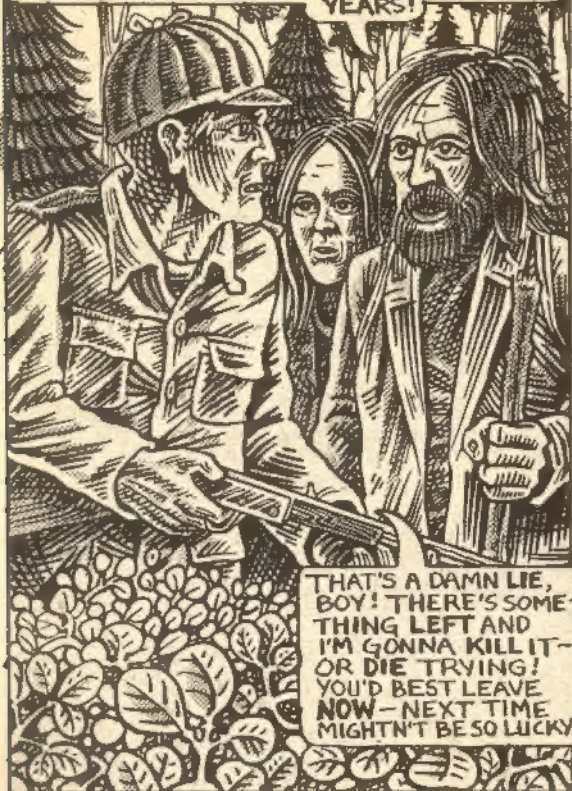
WHO A MAN - DON'T SHOOT!

WHAT THE HELL?!
YOU TRY-
ING TO GET
YERSELF
KILLED OR
SOME-
THING?

DON'T YOU KNOW IT'S
HUNTING SEASON?

DEPARTMENT
OF ECOLOGY
LICENSE TO KILL
NO. 123456789
007

WHAT DO YOU MEAN IT'S HUNTING SEASON?
THERE HASN'T BEEN ANY WILDLIFE FOR
YEARS!



THAT'S A DAMN LIE,
BOY! THERE'S SOME-
THING LEFT AND
I'M GONNA KILL IT-
OR DIE TRYING!
YOU'D BEST LEAVE
NOW - NEXT TIME
MIGHTN'T BE SO LUCKY.



DAMN WEIRD-
O'S! SHOULD'A
SHOT 'EM ANY-
HOW...

HEAVY...

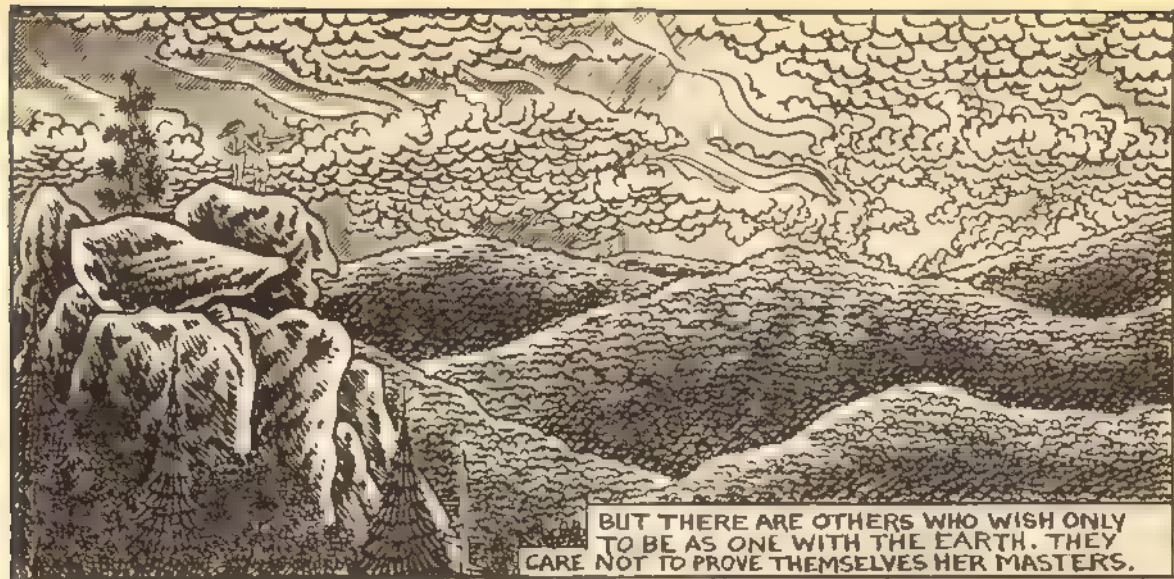


THAT GUY SEEMED
REALLY WIGGED OUT-
SHOULDN'T WE RE-
PORT HIM OR SOME-
THING?

SURE, BABY - YOU
GOT A PHONE ON
YOU?

THE BLAZING SUN UNDERMINES HUNTER'S STRENGTH BUT THE LONGING FOR VIRILITY SUSTAINS HIM. HOURS PASS, NO 'GAME' APPEARS. ANXIOUS NERVES TAUTEN TO THE BREAKING POINT; HIS MIND SNAPS AND HE WOULD SCREAM OUT IN FRUSTRATION — BUT DARES NOT, FOR THE HUNT MUST GO ON.





BUT THERE ARE OTHERS WHO WISH ONLY
TO BE AS ONE WITH THE EARTH. THEY
CARE NOT TO PROVE THEMSELVES HER MASTERS.

HUNTER CANNOT LET BE
BUT LUSTS FOR CONQUEST.



HE THINKS OF THE CITY TO
WHICH HE MUST RETURN—
WHERE HE IS THE HUNT-
ED; AN IMPOTENT PARANOID
LIKE ALL THE REST.



WANNA
MAKE IT,
LOV—
UHHNN

LEMME SLEEP
YA RUNT!

WITH DREAD HE REMEMBERS HIS WIFE— A SEXLESS
DOG TO WHOM HE IS NAUGHT BUT A WEEKLY PAYCHECK.



BUT IN THE FOREST, HUNTER RULES.
HERE HE COULD PROVE HIS MAN-
HOOD - IF ONLY THERE WAS SOME-
THING TO KILL.

OBSESSED, HE PUSHES ON
THROUGH DARKENED
WOODS.

BUT HUNTER IS NOT
ALONE ON THE MOUNT-
AIN THIS NIGHT.
OTHERS BASK IN THE
SERENITY OF MOON-
LIT TREES...



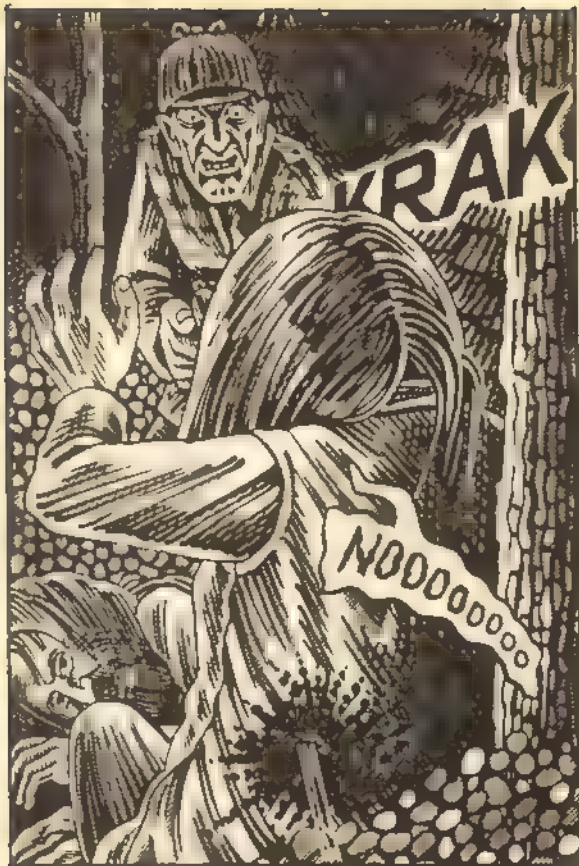
... UNTIL A SNAPPING
TWIG DISRUPTS
THEIR REVERIE.

HUNTER, TOO, SENSES
ANOTHER'S PRESENCE.
GUN POISED, HE
STEALTHFULLY AP-
PROACHES.



GIMME THAT
FLASHLIGHT-
QUICK!





WITH SUPERHUMAN EFFORT HUNTER MAN-
AGES TO TRANSPORT THEIR LIFELESS
BODIES MANY MILES TO HIS CAR.



ONCE THERE, HE EXCITEDLY MAKES READY
FOR THE LONG JOURNEY BACK TO
SUBURBIA.



DRIVING HOME, HUNTER SAVORS THOUGHTS OF WHAT FINE TROPHIES THEIR
MOUNTED HEADS WILL MAKE, AND THEN WON'T EVERYONE KNOW WHAT A FEARLESS
MAN — IS THE HUNTER.

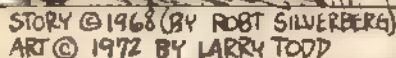
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I RISE. I COLLECT MYSELF. MY HAIR IS RUMPLED. I COMB IT. MY FACE IS CREASED FROM TOO LITTLE SLEEP. THERE IS SOURNESS IN MY MOUTH. HAS MY PASSENGER BEEN EATING DUNG WITH MY LIPS?

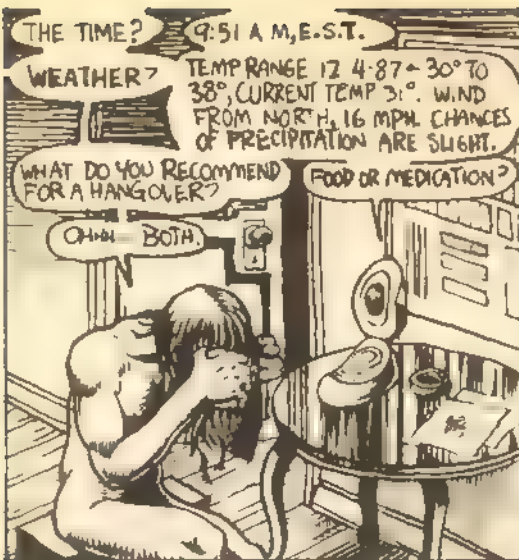
DO THAT. THEY DO ANYTHING.

IT IS MORNING.



MY ROOM LOOKS UNTIDY DID I HAVE A WOMAN HERE? THERE ARE
ASHES IN THE TRAYS, SEARCHING FOR REMAINS I FIND SEVERAL WITH
LIPSTICK STAINS. YES A WOMAN WAS HERE. I TOUCH THE BEDSHEETS
STILL WARM WITH SHARED WARMTH BOTH PILLOWS TOUSLED SHE HAS
GONE, TOO, AND THE PASSENGER IS GONE, AND I AM ALONE. HOW LONG
DID IT LAST, THIS TIME? I PICK UP THE PHONE AND RING CENTRAL





DEC. 4, CENTRAL COMPUTOR SAID FRIDAY. SO THE PASSENGER HAD ME FOR THREE NIGHTS. I DRINK THE PURPLISH FLUID THAT ARRIVES IN THE MEDICATION SLOT, AND PROBE MY MEMORIES IN A GINGERLY WAY, AS ONE MIGHT PROBE A FESTERING SORE.

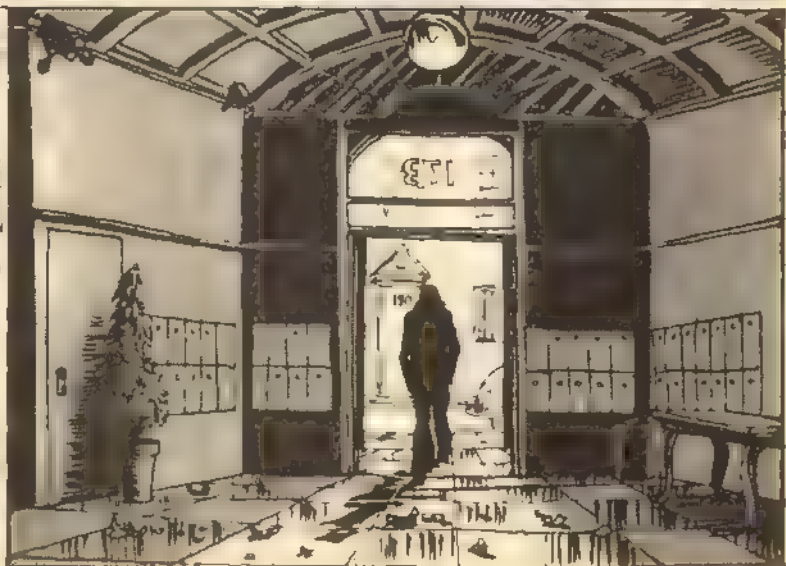
I REMEMBER TUESDAY MORNING A BAD TIME AT WORK. NONE OF THE CHARTS WILL COME OUT RIGHT. THE SECTION MANAGER IS IRRITABLE; HE HAS BEEN TAKEN BY PASSENGERS 3 TIMES IN 5 WEEKS, AND HE TAKES OUT HIS FRUSTRATIONS ON US. I DO NOT REMEMBER TUESDAY AFTERNOON.



THAT MUST HAVE BEEN WHEN THE PASSENGER TOOK ME. I COUGH, I LURCH, I STUMBLE FROM MY SEAT. THEY SHAKE THEIR HEADS SADLY. NO ONE REACHES FOR ME. NO ONE STOPS ME. IT IS TOO DANGEROUS TO INTERFERE WITH ONE WHO HAS A PASSENGER. THE CHANCES ARE GREAT THAT A SECOND PASSENGER LURKS NEARBY IN THE DISCORPORATE STATE, LOOKING FOR A MOUNT. SO I AM AVOIDED. I LEAVE THE BUILDING, BUT AFTER THAT, WHAT? THE CONSCIOUS MIND FUNCTIONS DURING THE POSSESSION, BUT UPON WITHDRAWAL OF THE PASSENGER, NEARLY EVERY RECOLLECTION VANISHES ALSO.



I TRY TO RECALL. A GIRL? YES LIPSTICK ON THE ROUGHES SEX, THEN, HERE IN MY ROOM. YOUNG? OLD? BLONDE? DARK? ALL IS HAZY. HOW DID MY BODY BEHAVE? I CAN MAKE A WOMAN GLOW THE WAY A WOMAN IS MEANT TO GLOW. THIS IS MY SKILL. BUT PASSENGERS, I AM TOLD, TAKE WRY AMUSEMENT IN CONTRVERTING OUR SKILLS. SO WOULD IT HAVE GIVEN MY RIDER A KIND OF DELIGHT TO FIND ME A WOMAN AND FORCE ME TO FAIL REPEATEDLY WITH HER? I DISLIKE THAT THOUGHT, I SHOVE IT AWAY. FRESH AIR IS WHAT I WANT, NEXT QUICKLY I SLEEP INTO MY CLOTHES AND LEAVE MY ROOM. I KNOW THAT AT WORK, THEY KNOW I HAVE HAD A PASSENGER. I WILL HAVE A FREE DAY, REPAYING MY BODY FOR THE ABUSE IT HAS SUFFERED.





I BEGIN TO WALK WITHOUT PURPOSE. AT FIFTH AND 22ND I SEE A PAUNCHY MAN BEING RIDDEN, AND TWO ADOLESCENT GIRLS, ONE OF THEM RIDDEN, QUARRELING. I AVERT MY EYES. ONE DOESN'T WATCH A FELLOW SUFFERER... THERE IS A MORALITY OF THE RIDDEN; WE HAVE SO MANY NEW TRIBAL MORES IN THESE DARK DAYS. I HURRY ON.

COGITO ERGO SUM NO LONGER WORKS. WE GO ON THINKING EVEN WHILE WE ARE RIDDEN, AND WE LIVE IN QUIET DESPERATION UNABLE TO HALT OUR COURSES, NO MATTER HOW GHASTLY, NO MATTER HOW SELF-DESTRUCTIVE. I AM CERTAIN THAT I CAN DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE STATE OF BEARING A PASSENGER AND THE STATE OF BEING FREE. BUT PERHAPS NOT.

PERHAPS I BEAR A PARTICULARLY DEVILISH PASSENGER WHICH HAS NOT QUITTED ME AT ALL, BUT WHICH HAS MERELY RECEDED TO THE CEREBELLUM, LEAVING ME THE ILLUSION OF FREEDOM WHILE ALL THE TIME SECRETLY DRIVING ME ONWARD TOWARD SOME DEVIOUS PURPOSE OF ITS OWN.

DID WE EVER HAVE MORE THAN THAT; THE ILLUSION OF FREEDOM? I AM AT 42ND STREET. I STOP BUT IS THE DECISION TRULY MINE?

I SIT ON THE COLD LIBRARY STEPS AND TELL MYSELF I HAVE MADE THIS DECISION FOR MYSELF.



IT IS THE OLD PROBLEM, FREE WILL VS DETERMINISM, TRANSLATED INTO THE FOULEST OF TERMS. DETERMINISM IS NO LONGER A PHILOSOPHER'S ABSTRACTION; IT IS COLD ALIEN TENDRILS SLIDING BETWEEN THE CRANIAL SUTURES. THE PASSENGERS ARRIVED 3 YEARS AGO. I HAVE BEEN RIDDEN 5 TIMES. OUR WORLD IS QUITE DIFFERENT NOW FROM THE WORLD I REMEMBER. BUT WE HAVE ADJUSTED EVEN TO THIS. LIFE GOES ON. WE COMPENSATE FOR THE RANDOM HAVOC WE HAVE AN ENEMY WE CANNOT FIGHT; AT BEST WE CAN RESIST THROUGH ENDURANCE. SO WE ENDURE.



THEN I SEE THE GIRL.

THE MORE I STUDY THE PEOPLE ABOUT ME WHO ARE RIDDEN, THE MORE CONVINCED I BECOME THAT I, FOR THE TIME, AM FREE. THE LAST TIME I HAD 3 MONTHS BETWEEN RIDES. SOME PEOPLE ARE HARDLY EVER FREE. WE HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE HOW MANY PASSENGERS INFEST OUR WORLD. MILLIONS, MAYBE, OR MAYBE FIVE. WHO CAN TELL?

I KNOW HER. I HAVE SPENT THE PAST THREE NIGHTS WITH HER. SHE IS THE ONE. RIDDEN, SHE CAME TO ME, AND RIDDEN, I SLEPT WITH HER. OF THIS I AM CERTAIN. THE VEIL OF MEMORY PARTS. I SEE HER SLIM BODY NAKED ON MY BED, THE ROSY TIPPED BREASTS HEAVING, THE ARM OUTSTRETCHED, THE BIRTHMARK ABOVE HER RIB.



HOW CAN IT BE THAT I REMEMBER THIS?

NOW I AM DRAWN TO HER. THERE IS AN ETIQUETTE TO SUCH THINGS. IT IS IN POOR TASTE TO APPROACH SOMEONE WHOM YOU MET WHILE BEING RIDDEN. SUCH AN ENCOUNTER GIVES YOU NO PRIVILEGE. ALL VOWS AND PLEDGES INDUCED BY A PASSENGER ARE NULL AND VOID WITH THE DEPARTURE OF THE PASSENGER. IT IS THE ONLY WAY WE CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTS OF OUR PASSENGERS.



YET I AM DRAWN TO HER. WHY THIS VIOLATION OF TABOO, THIS RAW BREACH OF ETIQUETTE? I HAVE NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE. I HAVE BEEN SCRUPULOUS.



HELLO! I DON'T THINK I KNOW YOU!

NO, YOU DON'T. BUT I HAVE THE FEELING YOU DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE. I KNOW I DON'T.



THERE'S SNOW IN THE AIR... IS IT TOO EARLY FOR A DRINK?

I... HARDLY KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS. I'M NOT SURE...



IT'S BEFORE NOON.

LET'S HAVE A DRINK, ANYWAY.

WE GO TO A COCKTAIL LOUNGE ACROSS THE STREET. HER NAME IS HELEN MARTIN AND HER EYES ARE BLOODSHOT. SHE HAS HAD LITTLE SLEEP THESE PAST THREE NIGHTS.



WAS IT VERY UNPLEASANT FOR YOU? WHAT?

THE PASSENGER.



H. HOW DID YOU KNOW I'VE HAD A PASSENGER?

I KNOW.

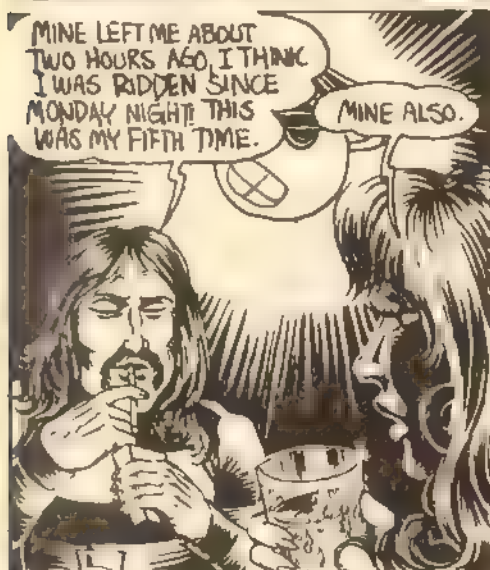
WE AREN'T...WE AREN'T SUPPOSED TO DISCUSS SUCH THINGS...

I'M BROAD MINDED MINE LEFT ME SOMETIME DURING THE NIGHT. I WAS RIDDEN SINCE TUESDAY AFTERNOON.



OH...

MINE LEFT ME ABOUT TWO HOURS AGO. I THINK I WAS RIDDEN SINCE MONDAY NIGHT. THIS WAS MY FIFTH TIME.



MINE ALSO.

WE TOY WITH OUR DRINKS. RAPPORT IS GROWING. ALMOST ALL OUT THE NEED FOR WORDS.

WE TALK. SHE IS A DESIGNER OF DISPLAY WINDOWS. SHE LIVES ALONE IN A SMALL APT. SEVERAL BLOCKS FROM HERE. SHE ASKS WHAT I DO. 'SECURITIES ANALYST'. I LAUGH HOLLOWLY, AS IF THERE IS ANY SECURITY TO BE FOUND AT ANY PRICE. I WANT TO REACH OUT TO HER AND GATHER HER CLOSE.

I AM AFRAID OF FRIGHTENING HER, SO I DO NOT TRY TO PRESS MY ADVANTAGE TOO QUICKLY. WE FINISH OUR DRINKS, AND ARRANGE TO MEET TOMORROW. MY HAND MOMENTARILY BRUSHES HERS, AND THEN SHE IS GONE....



I FILL THREE ASHTRAYS THAT NIGHT, DEBATING OVER AND OVER THE WISDOM OF WHAT I AM DOING.

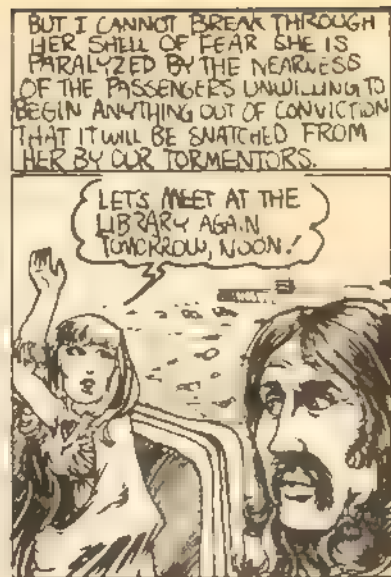


MORNING COMES. A QUIET SATURDAY. I RETURN TO THE LIBRARY. HARDLY EXPECTING TO FIND HER THERE, AND THE SIGHT OF HER IS LIKE A REPRINCE. SHE LOOKS WARY, TROUBLED, OBVIOUSLY SHE HAS DONE MUCH THINKING, LITTLE SLEEPING THIS NIGHT PAST. TOGETHER WE WALK ALONG 5TH AVENUE, BUT SHE DOES NOT TAKE MY ARM. HER VOICE IS BRITTLE AND NERVOUS.

CHARLES... I CAN... FEEL THEM WATCHING ME ALL THE TIME! LIKE VULTURES SWEEPING OVER HEAD, WAITING, WAITING, READY TO POUNCE!

BUT THERE'S A WAY OF BEATING THEM. WE CAN GRAB LITTLE SCRAPS OF LIFE WHEN THERE'RE NOT LOOKING!

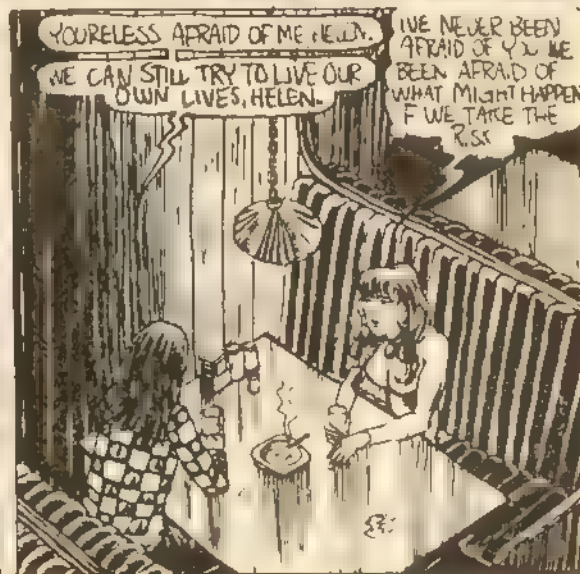
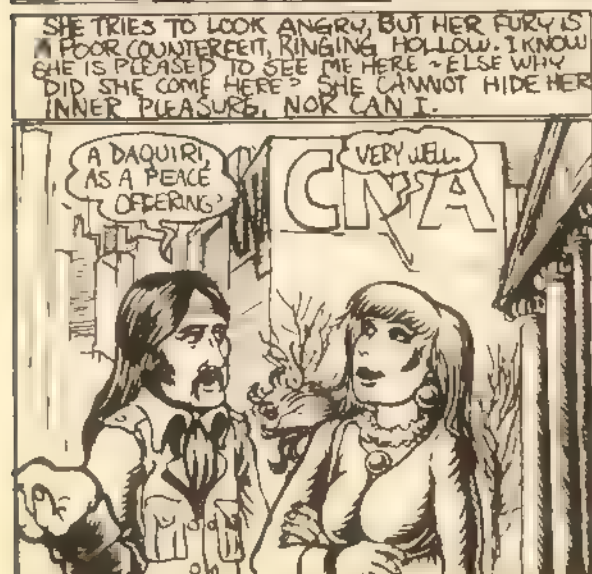




SOME OF HER PESSIMISM SEEPS INTO ME THAT NIGHT. IT SEEMS FUTILE FOR US TO TRY TO SALVAGE ANYTHING. MORE THAN THAT IT IS WICKED OF ME TO SEEK HER OUT SHAMEFUL TO OFFER A HESITANT LOVE WHEN I AM NOT FREE. IN THIS WORLD, I TELL MYSELF, WE SHOULD KEEP CLEAR OF OTHERS, SO THAT WE DO NOT HARM ANYBODY WHEN WE ARE SEIZED AND RIDDEN I DO NOT GO TO MEET HER IN THE MORNING.

MONDAY COMES AND I RETURN TO WORK. NATURALLY NO ONE EVEN DISCUSSES MY ABSENCE WITH ME. IT IS AS THOUGH I HAVE NEVER BEEN AWAY.

THE MARKET IS STRONG THAT MORNING, THE WORK IS CHALLENGING, IT IS MID-MORNING BEFORE I THINK OF HELEN AT ALL. BUT WHEN I DO, I CAN THINK OF NOTHING ELSE. AT LUNCHTIME I GO TO THE LIBRARY, CONVINCED IT IS FUTILE.



WE FINISH OUR DRINKS AND I PAY THROUGH MY CREDIT CENTRAL CARD I WANT TO HEAR HER TELL ME TO FORGET MY WORK AND COME HOME WITH HER, FOR IT IS INEVITABLE SHE WILL, BUT I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO. I MUST RE-INQUISH MY UNFAIR ADVANTAGE.

HELEN, WHILE I WAS RIDDEN LAST WEEK, I HAD A GIRL IN MY ROOM.



GOOD FOR YOU WHY TALK OF SUCH THINGS NOW?

I HAVE TO, HELEN. YOU WERE THAT GIRL.

THAT'S NOT FUNNY, CHARLES....

IT ISN'T MEANT TO BE. YOU WERE WITH ME FROM TUESDAY NIGHT TO FRIDAY MORNING!



HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY KNOW THAT?

NO!

I'VE NO IDEA, BUT I DO! WE WERE VERY GOOD TOGETHER. WE MUST HAVE RELEASED OUR PASS ENGINERS WE WERE SO GOOD!



LET'S GO TO YOUR APT AND START AGAIN.

NOW YOU'RE BEING DELIBERATELY FILTHY, AND I DON'T KNOW WHY BUT MAYBE YOU SHOULD JUST SHUT UP AND...

YOU HAVE A BIRTHMARK THE SIZE OF A DIME 3 INCHES BELOW YOUR LEFT BREAST!

WE'LL DEFEAT THEM HELEN. WE'LL FINISH WHAT THEY STARTED. DON'T FIGHT ME! I KNOW IT'S A FLUKE THAT I REMEMBER YOU, BUT LET ME GO WITH YOU AND I'LL PROVE WE BELONG TOGETHER!

LET-GO!



STOPPIT, CHARLES!

IT'S WRONG!

WHAT'S WRONG? I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S WRONG, IT'S THIS ASSININE CUSTOM FOR TWO PEOPLE BROUGHT TOGETHER BY PASS ENGINERS TO AVOID EACH OTHER!



PLEASE, HELEN! TRUST ME... PLEASE!

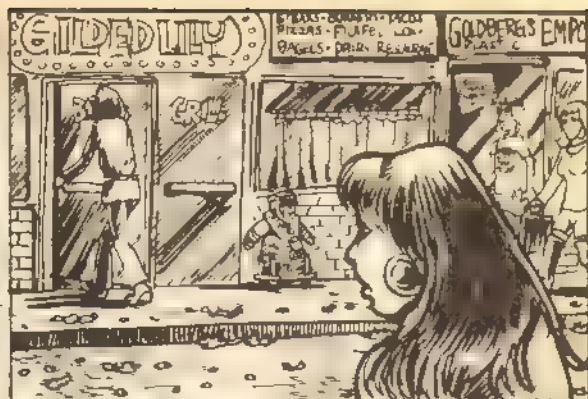
AL... ALRIGHT CHARLES!



IN THAT MOMENT I FEEL THE CHILL AT THE BACK OF MY SKULL AS OF A STEEL NEEDLE DRIVEN DEEP THROUGH THE BONE. I STIFFEN AND WHEN I RELAX, ALL IS VERY DIFFERENT.



CHARLES...





"A REVELATION!"

—Saturday Review

"Stunning in
both technique
and artistry!"

—New York Times

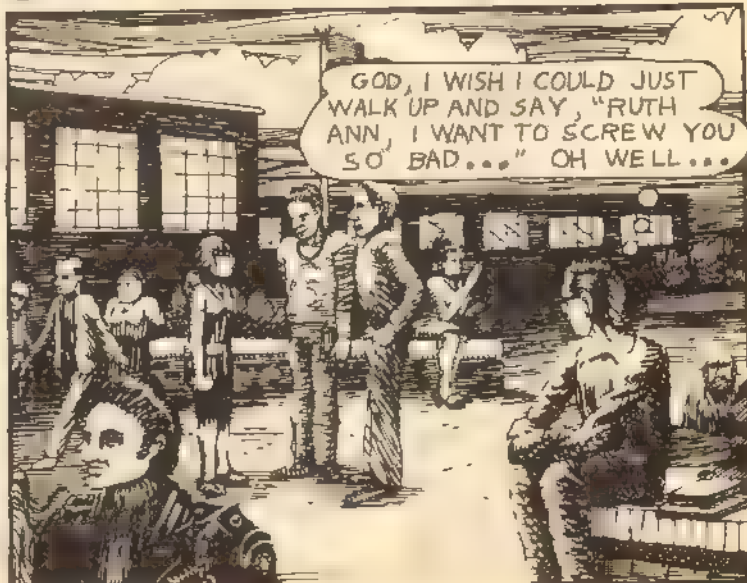
LOVE STORY

HAROLD NEVER COULD
MAKE IT WITH ANY OF
THE GIRLS AT SCHOOL.
UNTIL HE MET
RUTH ANN...

Michael C Smith



GEE... SHE SURE IS
ONE SEXY CUNT.. SHE
WOULDN'T GIVE ME THE
TIME OF DAY THOUGH..



GOD, I WISH I COULD JUST
WALK UP AND SAY, "RUTH
ANN, I WANT TO SCREW YOU
SO BAD..." OH WELL...

HAROLD!! STOP DREAMING AND STUDY!!



HAROLD BECOMES TOTALLY OBSESSED WITH RUTH ANN. THE TIME HE ONCE TOOK WITH STUDIES IS SPENT INVENTING EROTIC FANTASIES AND MASTURBATING IN BROOM CLOSETS. AT LAST HE IS SENT TO SEE THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR...



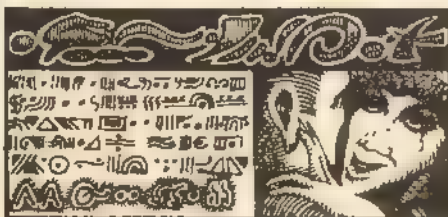
SO HAROLD IT SEEMS BEST FOR ALL OF US IF YOU QUIT SCHOOL AND PURSUE AN UGH, BLUE COLLAR FUTURE. ARE WE COMMUNICATING, HAROLD??



COMMUNICATING??? SURE MR. COX - ANYTHING YOU SAY SIR...



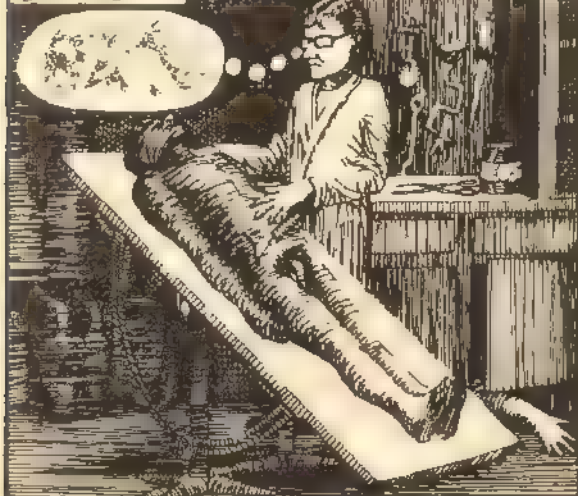
HAROLD QUILTS SCHOOL AND HITS THE STREET... HE SOON FINDS THAT JOBS FOR A 17 YEAR OLD SEX-OBSESSED DROP OUT ARE NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND... BUT NOT COMPLETELY...



OK PUNK.. YA GOT THE NIGHT EMBALM N JOB.. BUT YOU GOT TO LEARN QUICK!! I GOT FIVE STIFFS ON ICE



HAROLD'S NIGHTS WERE FILLED WITH AN ENDLESS SUCCESSION OF MUTILATED BODIES...

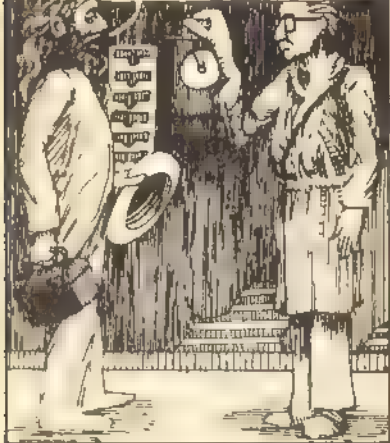


AND HIS DAYS WERE FILLED WITH THE BOREDOM OF A TOTAL RECLUSE AND HIS EVER GROWING OBSESSION...



UNTIL, ONE NIGHT AS HE
REPORTED FOR WORK...

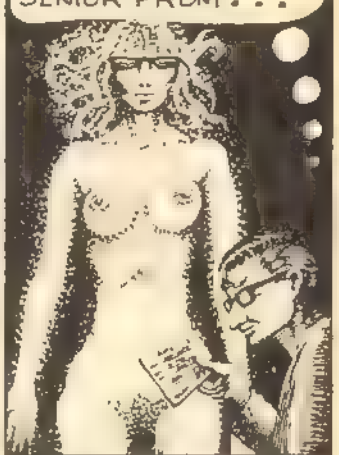
YA GOT A FRESH STIFF
TONIGHT-I ALREADY GOT
IT ON THE TABLE..



SHIT!! THE NIGHT OF
THE PROM AND I GOTTA
WORK ON A FUCKIN'
BODY. I WONDER
WHO'LL BE HOSING RUTH
ANN TONIGHT???



... KILLED IN A CAR
WRECK IN FRONT OF
CITY HIGH FOLLOWING
SENIOR PROM...





BUT HAROLD WAS NEVER CAUGHT... RUTHANN WAS BURIED, BUT HAROLD BECAME EVEN MORE OBSESSED WITH THE UNATTAINABLE...

MONTHS PASS...



STOP DREAMIN' AND GET MOVIN' ON THAT STIFF HAROLD



HAROLD'S NIGHT OFF...

GEE, TONIGHT IS EXACTLY ONE YEAR SINCE RUTHANN AND I... MAYBE, I SHOULD GO OUT TO THE GRAVEYARD.

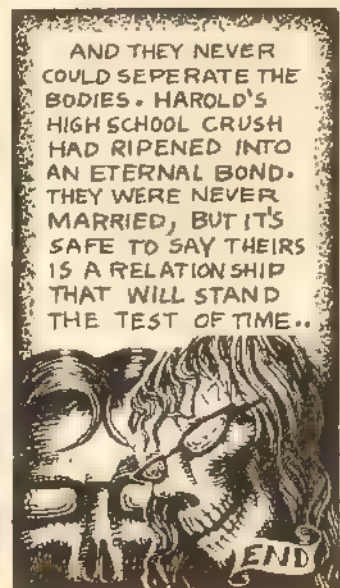
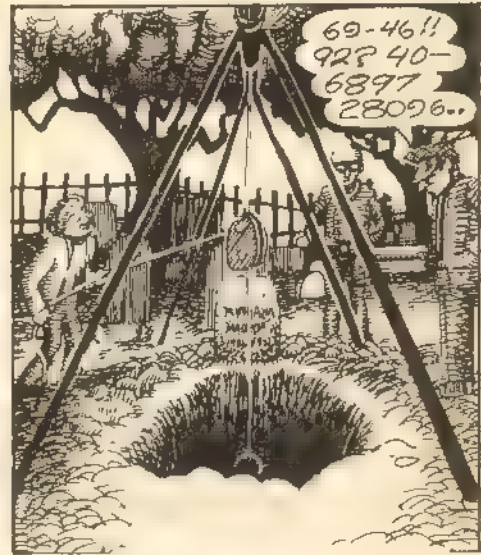
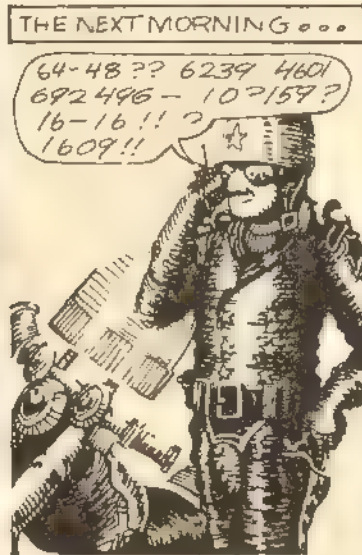
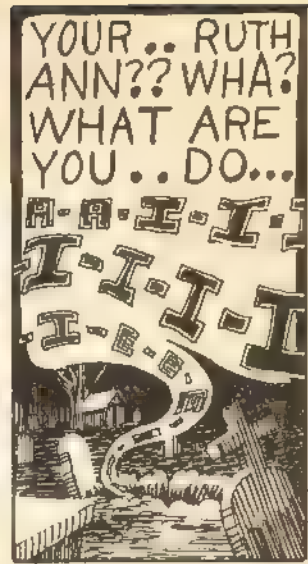


AND VISIT HER GRAVE...



I'M COMING, DARLING







Sea-hag

ON THIS ROCK SHE
WAITS. AGELESS.
TIMELESS. ALONE.
NO ONE, BUT HER FRIENDS
IN SEA, KNOWS OF HER.
AND SHE DOES NOT DARE THE
RISK OF DISCOVERY BY MAN.



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FROM A PLANET
MANY LIGHT YEARS
AWAY, WEALTHY
VACATIONERS
COME TO EARTH
TO ENJOY ITS
UNIQUE ATMOS-
PHERE AND ITS
WARM SEA
COASTS.



WHEN THE VACA-
TION IS OVER
THE TOUR GUIDE
GIVES THE ORDER
TO BOARD THE
INTERGALACTIC
TRANSPORTERS



ONE PASSENGER
HAS FOUND A
CAVE UNDER THE
ROCKS. SHE
IS TRYING TO
COMMUNICATE
WITH A PORPOISE
WHEN THE ORDER
IS GIVEN. SHE DOES
NOT HEAR THE
SEARCH FOR HER AND
IS LEFT BEHIND.



THE EARTH CENTURIES PASS. SHE GROWS OLD WAITING FOR HER RESCUE.



MEANWHILE SHE HAS LEARNED TO SURVIVE....



AND TO AVOID CONTACT WITH THE VIOLENT SPECIES THAT DOMINATES THIS PLANET.



SHE MISSES THE LIFE SHE ONCE HAD.



SHE REMEMBERS MUSIC SHE HEARD LONG AGO.



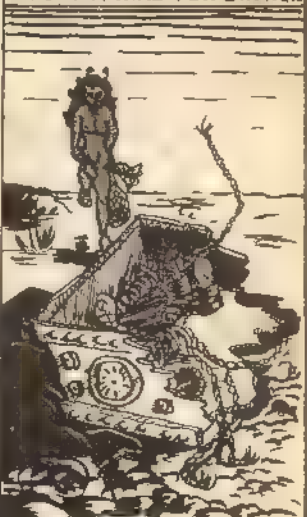
DECIDING TO CREATE HER OWN MUSIC, SHE COMBS THE BEACH FOR PARTS TO MAKE AN INSTRUMENT.



SHE SHAPES WOOD WITH A BROKEN SHELL.



WRECKAGE FROM MODERN SHIPS GIVE HER WIRE FOR STRINGS.



AND SHE FINDS A LONELY CRYSTAL TO REFLECT THE SUN'S RAYS. SHE MOUNTS IT ON TOP OF HER INSTRUMENT TO ENJOY IT WHILE SHE IS PLAYING.



SHE SPENDS LONG HOURS ENTERTAINING HER ANIMAL FRIENDS. SHE DOES NOT KNOW THAT THIS TIME SHE IS OVERHEARD BY A YOUNG MAN BACK-PACKING ALONG THE COAST.



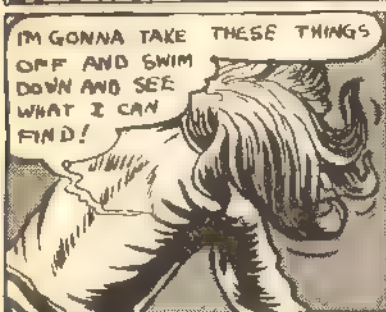
THERE'S MUSIC COMING FROM
THIS HOLE IN THE GROUND!



THERE MUST BE SOMEONE IN A CAVE UNDER
THESE ROCKS. SURE WOULD LIKE TO FIND OUT
WHO PLAYS SUCH FAR-OUT MUSIC.



IM GONNA TAKE THESE THINGS
OFF AND SWIM
DOWN AND SEE
WHAT I CAN
FIND!



AS I SUSPECTED!
AN UNDERWATER
TUNNEL!



FRIGHTENED BY HER
FIRST CONFRONTATION
WITH 'TAAN', THE
SEA HAG DROPS HER
INSTRUMENT !!!!!

AND DIVES INTO THE
WATER TO ESCAPE!



NO. WAIT.

I'LL TAKE THIS ALONG
AND TRY TO FIND HER!
WHATEVER SHE IS.....



BUT HER FEAR OF
MAN HAS ALREADY
TAKEN HER FAR AWAY.

UNABLE TO FIND ANY SIGN OF
THE INSTRUMENT'S MYSTERIOUS OWNER.

I'M GOING BACK TO
THE CITY TO GET
HELP FINDING HER.
WHAATEVER SHE IS, SHE
SHOULD BE STUDIED
BY SCIENCE

I'LL BE FAMOUS FOR THIS
DISCOVERY, MAYBE EVEN RICH!
I WONDER WHERE SHE CAME
FROM? OUTER SPACE? THE SEA?

MAYBE SHE IS A
MERMAID. BUT AN
OLD ONE, FOR SURE!
AN OLD HAG! A
SEA HAG

OH, IT'S SO
GOOD! OH-
OH- OH- OH!
M-M-M-M!
A-A-H-H!

LAND NO!

O-O-O-O-O-O-
O-O-O-O-O-O-
O-O-O-O-O-O-
O-O-O-M-M-
M-M-M-M-M-M.....

OH! M-M-M-M,
OH! A-A-H!
N-N-N-H!
M-M-M-M-M!
O-O-O!

SPARE
CHANGE?

Hi! High?

GOT ANY
DOPE?

WANNA
RIDE?

**FROG
FARM**



FOR 670

LUCK DICK 72

WASH YOUR HANDS HERE

MANY MILES DOWN THE ROAD....

THAT'S WHERE I GOT IT.
DO YOU WANT TO HELP ME
FIND HER?

A SEA HAG, HUH?
MUST BE SOME
HEAVY ACID!

YOU TOOK THAT FROM
HER? THAT'S STEALING!

YOU BELIEVE ME,
DON'T YOU?

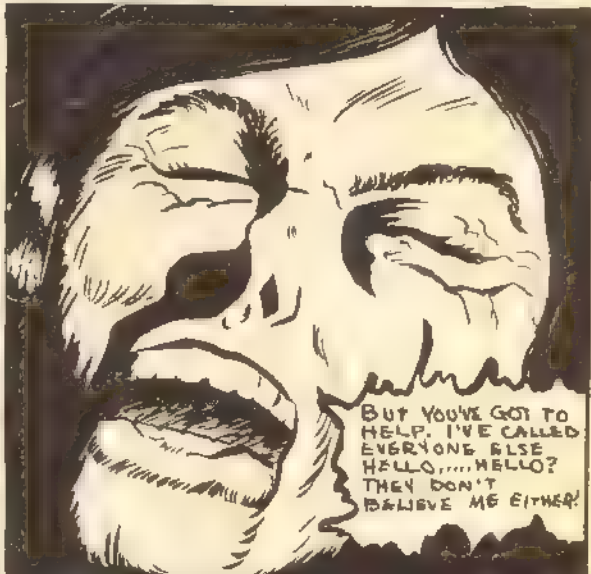
EVEN IF IT WERE
TRUE, IT'S WRONG
TO LOCK ANYTHING
UP!

YEAH! AND TO
THINK OF
MAKING A
PROFIT BY IT!
YOUR HEAD IS
MESSED UP!

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!
I GOTTA GET OUT HERE.
THANKS FOR THE RIDE.



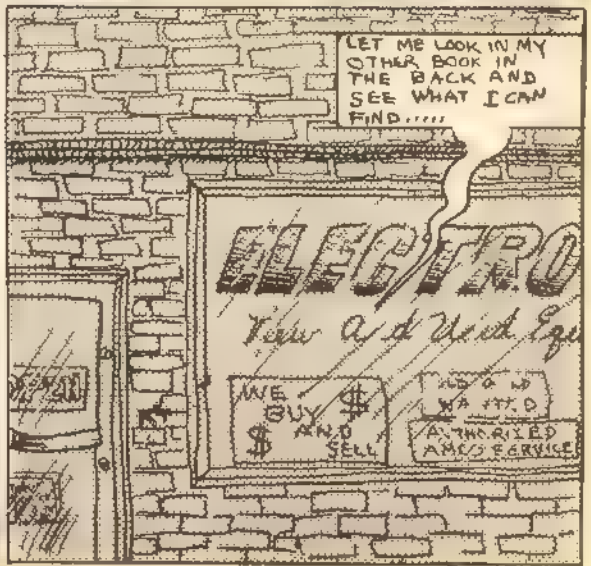
LOTS OF PEOPLE WILL
BELIEVE ME, AND
THEY'LL HELP ME
FIND HER!



MAYBE THIS STRANGE
CRYSTAL IS WORTH SOME
MONEY. I'LL GET WHAT
I CAN AND GO CAPTURE
HER MYSELF.



LET ME LOOK IN MY
OTHER BOOK IN
THE BACK AND
SEE WHAT I CAN
FIND.....



MEANWHILE DOWN THE COAST...

I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET HIM LEAVE AFTER HE SAW ME. HE WILL RETURN WITH MORE OF HIS KIND TO HUNT FOR ME.

BUT I **MUST** RETURN TO THE CAVE FOR MY TREASURED INSTRUMENT!

WILL YOU GO WITH ME, MY GENTLE FRIEND? MAYBE YOU WILL KNOW BY YOUR INSTINCT IF THEY ARE THERE AND WARN ME.

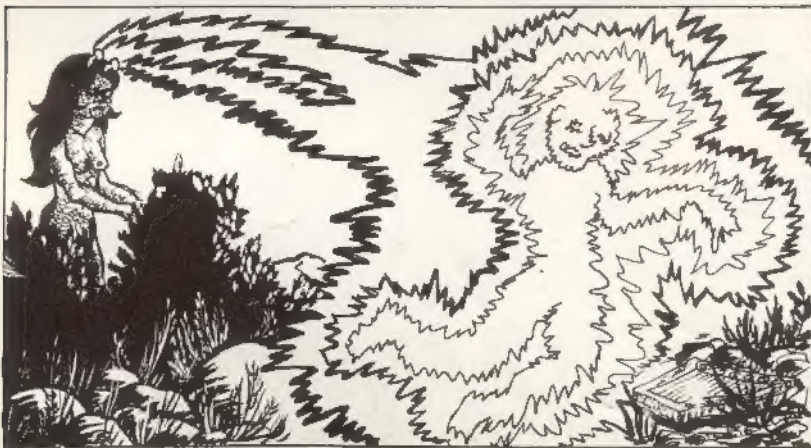
I HOPE WE WILL BE SAFE. BUT I MUST TRY TO GET IT BACK.

IT'S NOT HERE IN THE CAVE.

WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

COULD IT BE?

ONLY ONE WAY TO KNOW I'M SAFE!



INJECT A LITTLE PARANOIA IN YOUR LIFE!





Sir Real's

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